

## OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

## 'Twas the Night Before Christmas.

'Twas the night before Christmas,  
when all through the house,  
Not a creature was stirring, not even  
a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the  
chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon  
would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug  
in their beds,  
While visions of sugar plums danced  
in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I  
in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a  
long winter's nap—  
When out on the lawn there arose  
such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what  
was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a  
flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up  
the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-  
fallen snow,  
Gave a luster of midday to objects  
below;  
When, what to my wandering eyes  
should appear,  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny  
reindeer,  
With a little old driver, so lively  
and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St.  
Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers  
they came,  
And he whistled and shouted and  
called them by name:  
"Now, Dasher, now, Dancer, now,  
Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder  
and Blitzen!  
To the top of the porch, to the top  
of the wall!  
Now dash away, dash away, dash  
away all!"  
As dry leaves that before the wild  
hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle,  
mount to the sky,  
So up to the housetops the coursers  
they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys—and St.  
Nicholas, too,  
And then in a twinkling I heard on  
the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each  
little hoof.  
As I drew in my head and was turn-  
ing around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came  
with a bound.  
He was dressed all in fur from his  
head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished  
with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his  
back,  
And he looked like a peddler just  
opening his pack.  
His eyes, how they twinkled; his  
dimples, how merry  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose  
like a cherry;  
His droll little mouth was drawn up  
like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as  
white as the snow.  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in  
his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head  
like a wreath.  
He had a broad face and a little  
round belly  
That shook, when he laughed, like a  
bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump—a right  
jolly old elf;  
And I laughed, when I saw him, in  
spite of myself.  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his  
head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing  
to dread.  
He spoke not a word, but went  
straight to his work,

And laying his finger aside of his  
nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney  
he rose.  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team  
gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down  
of a thistle;  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove  
out of sight,  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all  
a good-night!"

—Selected.

## Better Than a Tree.

The Barnes children couldn't have  
any Christmas tree this year, but  
they had a jollier time than they had  
ever had with a tree. Joe said so,  
and George said so, too; and Grace  
and Winnie agreed with them. This  
is how it was done. A delightful  
young auntie lives with them.

They call her the lady with a  
Bright Idea. She always has a new  
bright idea just in the nick of time,  
but this year it did seem as if the  
idea was brighter than ever.

There was a very mysterious feel-  
ing in the air Christmas morning.  
Everybody looked at everybody else,  
and then they all smiled. Something  
good was going to happen. When  
the breakfast plates were lifted there  
were little envelopes tied with gay  
ribbons. Such a time as the children  
had untying them! In each was a  
card, and on each card was a verse  
signed, "The Christmas Postman."

Joe shouted as he read his aloud:

When you get this, dear Joe,  
You must straight away go  
And look under your bed,  
But pray don't bump your head!

Joe jumped up, but auntie called:  
"Here, you must wait until the rest  
have read their notes, and all start  
at once."

The verses were all short. George  
read his next:

Look behind your closet door  
For a great big package on the floor.

Grace's read:

In the northeast chamber, out of  
sight,  
Under the coverlet, snowy white,  
You'll find a gift if you search just  
right.

Last came Winnie's:

A present lies on the garret stair;  
I think that Santa Claus dropped it  
there.

Then off the children ran to  
search for their presents. Such a

Bad grocer  
confesses his  
badness by sell-  
ing bad lamp-  
chimneys.

MACBETH.

You need to know how to manage your  
lamps to have comfort with them at small cost.  
Better read my Index; I send it free.

MACBETH, Pittsburgh.

stamping and scuffling and shouting  
the grown people never heard! Pret-  
ty soon they came rushing down in  
one after another. Then such an  
untying of strings and tearing off of  
wrapping papers as there was!

"Auntie! Auntie!" they shouted.  
"These are your presents! You are  
the Christmas postman!"

Auntie's gifts were not to be mis-  
taken. She made them nearly al-  
ways.

Joe's was an envelope album for  
scrapes.

Joe liked to cut all sorts of things  
out of newspapers and magazines.  
The scrap album was made of twenty-  
six big brown envelopes tied together  
by cords in a pasteboard cover. They  
could be taken out when filled and  
new ones put in.

George's "great big package" was  
a wooden box made into a nice little  
store. It had shelves and counters  
and a set of scales besides.

Grace's gift was a fancy work-bag  
with pockets holding embroidery  
silks.—Our Companion.

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